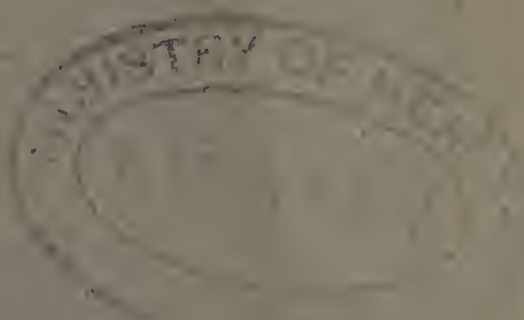


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The Amersham
Rural District Council.



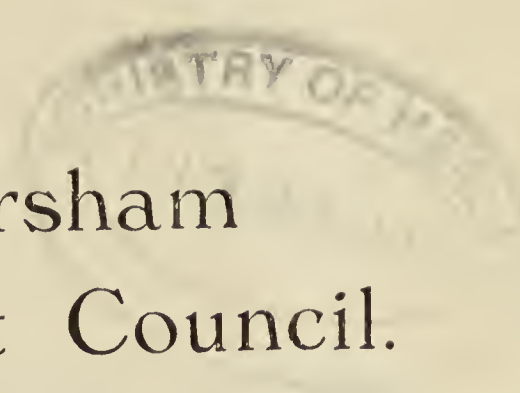
ANNUAL REPORT

... OF ...

THE MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH.



FOR THE YEAR
1925.


The Amersham
Rural District Council.



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TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS
OF THE
AMERSHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman and Councillors,

I have the honour of laying before you the Report on this District for 1925.

The area of the District is 45,700 acres.

The population at the time of the census in 1921 was 22,405; as estimated for 1925 it was 23,810, this being an increase of 440 since 1924.

The District consists of valleys and hills running more or less parallel to each other from the North West to the South East. As regards the soil there are deposits and belts of clay chiefly on the tops of the hills beneath which is found clayey loam to varying amounts with flints and gravel, and below this chalk. The clay varies in amount in different places from a few feet in depth to 20 feet. The chalk is reached in from 20 feet to 30 feet. The islets of clay are subject to marked changes under the varying temperature of the Seasons. On the surface of some of these are basins in which condensation takes place such as occurs in dewponds. Scattered over the District are many wayside ponds, a good many of these, however, have been filled in and the remainder are cleaned periodically.

The number of inhabited houses in 1921 was 5,029, and the number of families, or separate occupiers, in the same year was 5,200.

The rateable value (1925) was £159,206 and the sum represented by a penny rate £593.

The chief occupation of the inhabitants is Agriculture. There are also twenty-seven chair factories and workshops and two lawn tennis racket factories and one matting factory.

Vital Statistics of the Year.

	<i>Total.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	
BIRTHS { Legitimate	390 ...	191	199	} Birth rate per 1000—16·84.
Illegitimate	11 ...	6	5	

	<i>Total.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	
DEATHS ...	243 ...	119 ...	124	Death rate per 1000—10·20.

Both the Birth rate and Death rate are somewhat below the average for the population of England and Wales.

Number of Women dying in, or in consequence of Childbirth.

- (a) From Sepsis nil
- (b) From other causes nil

Deaths of Infants under One year of age per 1,000 births.

<i>Legitimate.</i>	<i>Illegitimate.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
69·82	4·98	74·81

Deaths from Measles (all ages) ...	..	nil
„ Whooping Cough (all ages)		3
„ Diarrhoea (under 2 years) ...		2

During the year ending March, 1925, the number of Paupers (exclusive of Vagrants) relieved was 734, of these 192 received Indoor Relief; 542 Outdoor Relief.

With regard to the causes of Sickness the presence of a Diphtheria carrier at Chalfont St. Peter and the condition of the cesspools in the same parish have caused some anxiety.

General Provision of Health Services in the District.

There are no Hospitals provided or subsidised by the Local Authority or County Council within the District, but an agreement has been made by the Rural District Council with the High Wycombe Isolation Hospital at Booker for the maintenance of cases of Infectious diseases admitted to this Hospital. The Hospitals available for the District are the following:—

I.—For Infectious Diseases other than Small Pox and Tuberculosis:

The High Wycombe Isolation Hospital at Booker.
The Aylesbury Isolation Hospital.
The Chesham Isolation Hospital.

II.—For Tuberculosis Cases:

The Berks and Bucks Sanatorium.

III.—For Non-infectious Diseases:

The Royal Bucks County Hospital at Aylesbury.
The Chesham Cottage Hospital.

Ambulance Facilities.

(a) *For Infectious Cases:*

Ambulances are supplied by the High Wycombe Isolation Hospital and the Aylesbury Isolation Hospital.

(b) *For Non-infectious Cases:*

An Ambulance is kept at Marshall's Garage, Waterside, Chesham.

Clinic and Treatment Centres.

There are eight Infant Welfare Centres—namely at Amersham-on-the-Hill, Chalfont St. Giles, Chalfont St. Peter, Great Missenden, The Lee, Ley Hill and Penn and Holmer Green.

School Clinics.—Ophthalmic and Dental at Chesham, Orthopædic at Aylesbury, Tuberculosis Dispensary at Chesham.

Public Health Officers.

Medical Officer of Health:

HUMPHREY ENGLAND, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,
Part Time Officer.

Sanitary Inspector:

MR. A. B. CROWHURST, M.S.I.A.,
Part Time Officer.

Contribution is made to the salaries of both the above under the Public Health Acts.

Professional Nursing in the Home.

(a) GENERAL.

Amersham Amersham Common Coleshill Winchmore Hill	}	1 Nurse appointed by Local District Nursing Association. Is a qualified mid-wife but does not practice as such.
Chalfont St. Giles	...	1 Nurse appointed by Local District Nursing Association. Is a qualified mid-wife and practices as such.
Chalfont St. Peter	...	Ditto.
The Lee	...	1 Nurse privately employed by Mrs. S. L. Liberty. Does not practice as mid-wife.
Ashley Green Whelpley Hill Ley Hill Lye Green Tylers Hill Latimer	}	1 Nurse appointed by Local District Nursing Committee. Is a qualified mid-wife and practices as such.
Holmer Green Penn Street Little Missenden	}	1 Nurse appointed by Local District Nursing Committee. Is a qualified wid-wife and practices as such.

Great Missenden	...	1 Nurse appointed by Local District Nursing Committee. Is a certified mid-wife and practices as such.
Penn	...	Ditto.
Chartridge	...	1 Nurse (private) who is a qualified mid-wife and practices as such.
Chesham Bois	...	1 Nurse (private) ditto.

There are nine qualified mid-wives (as shewn above) practicing in the District. They are not employed or subsidised by the Local Authority.

Laboratory Work.

Pathological and Bacterological Examinations are made when required by the Clinical Research Association, Watergate House, York Buildings, Adelphi.

Nineteen vials of Diphtheria Anti-toxin Serum of 2,000 units each have been issued and eleven samples of water analysed.

A supply of Diphtheria Anti-toxin is always kept. This and other Vaccines, when required, are supplied by Parke, Davis & Co.

Sanitary Administration.

Adoptive Acts—

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, Part III., adopted June 30th, 1903.

Bye-Laws—

New Streets and Buildings.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

WATER.

Three Water Companies supply the greater part of the area.

The Berkhamstead Water Company supply The Lee, Great Missenden, part of Little Missenden, Prestwood and neighbourhood.

The Rickmansworth Water Company supply Chalfont St. Peter, Gold Hill, Horn Hill and neighbourhood.

The Amersham, Beaconsfield & District Water Company supply Amersham, Chalfont St. Giles, Three Households, Seer Green, Penn and neighbourhood, and part of Chesham Bois.

The water supplied by these Companies is drawn from the chalk streams and is very pure as regards contamination and organic matter but is very hard. This hardness is however chiefly temporary and can be removed by treatment.

There are also deep wells in use the water of which is of the same character. One well in Chalfont St. Peter however, the water in which, on examination, was found to be unfit for drinking purposes, has been closed.

In some parts of the district the inhabitants depend on rain water tanks and surface wells which are inspected periodically by your Sanitary Inspector. The Water Companies have however been steadily extending the areas they supply so that the inhabitants in many places now have a more constant and better supply than hitherto.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

There is no pollution of the rivers or streams in the district reported during the year.

DRAINAGE AND SEWAGE.

Amersham has its own main drainage and sewage disposal farm which has hitherto worked well. There are some houses however which are not yet connected up and in which pail closets are still used.

Chesham Bois is now partly connected up with the Chesham main drainage scheme. At the end of the year there were 79 houses connected up, 37 of these both sinks and closets are connected, in 42 the sinks only.

At Chalfont St. Peter there is a main drainage system for the Latchmore Estate the septic tanks and filter beds of which have of late been far from satisfactory and the condition of things is about to be rectified.

Elsewhere the houses are drained on the cesspool system or pail closets are used.

There has been great difficulty in Chalfont St. Peter in emptying cesspools when required and a motor tank and pump are urgently needed. There is the same difficulty in other parts of the District, notably Great Missenden, and the inhabitants, particularly at Chalfont St. Peter, have had to have recourse to hiring the motor pump from the Eton District.

As regards closet accommodation the midden privies are being steadily done away with and pail closets substituted wherever the gardens are big enough to bury the contents.

In practically all the villages the house refuse is removed by dust cart once a week. There is also a night soil cart provided at Chesham Bois and Chalfont St. Peter.

Sanitary Inspector's Report.

This Return does not include work done under the Housing Acts.

I.—GENERAL.

Number of Inspections	...	...	...	...	...	738
Number of complains received	...	...	...	...	...	83
Nuisances detected without complaint	...	...	...	...	...	471
Notices served 273. Formal 176. Informal 97	...	...	...	...	...	273
Nuisances abated :						
(a) By persons responsible	..	..	...	...	...	413
(b) By Council	...	...	...	...	...	nil
Summonses taken out	.	...	...	...	...	nil
Convictions	...	...	...	...	...	nil

II.—HOUSE NUISANCES.

Roofs repaired	...	...	...	...	...	71
Spouts cleaned and repaired	..	...	...	...	...	38
Pavements repaired	..	...	...	...	...	22
Overcrowding abated	...	...	...	...	...	9
Dirty houses cleansed	...	...	...	...	...	47
Other house defects remedied	...	...	...	...	...	83

III.—DRAINS, W.C.'s, Etc.

Drains cleansed, repaired or ventilated	...	...	...	...	...	47
New drains laid	...	.	...	...	...	11
W.C.'s constructed	..	...	...	...	...	7
W.C.'s repaired	...	...	...	...	...	22
W.C.'s supplied with water (formerly without)	..	...	...	...	...	9
Earth closets, privies repaired	...	...	...	...	...	17

IV.—WATER SUPPLY.

Houses supplied with water (formerly without)	...	...	...	...	...	21
Samples of water analysed	...	..	...	...	...	11
Good	...	...	...	8		
Bad	...	...	...	3		
Water certificates granted (Rural Districts)	...	...	...	...	...	418
Water certificates deferred	„	„	...	...	...	nil
Cisterns cleansed and repaired	...	...	...	...	...	27
Wells cleansed and repaired...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Wells closed	...	...	...	...	...	1

V.—FOOD.

Seizures of unsound food (details separately) :—

Beef	}	nil
Mutton		
Pork		

Surrenders of unsound food (details separately) :—

Beef	193	1840
Mutton	93	
Pork	<u>1554</u>	

VI.—SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

Number on register	14
Number of inspections	42
Number of defects found	28
Number of defects remedied... ..	28

VII.—BAKE HOUSES.

Number on register	24
Number of inspections	48
Number of defects found	17
Number of defects remedied... ..	17

VIII.—DAIRIES, COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS.

Number of Dairymen or Purveyors of Milk on register ..	31
Number of Cowkeepers on register... ..	26
Number of inspections	2 each
Number of defects found	27
Number of defects remedied... ..	27

IX.—FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Number on register	27
Number of inspections	42
Number of defects found	11
Number of defects remedied... ..	11

X.—VARIOUS.

Visits to infected houses (3 and 4 each)	384
Houses disinfected (including Phthisis and Cancer) ...	91
Other items (e.g.) Common Lodging Houses, Canal Boats, &c.	nil

The Sanitary condition of the Private Schools and Public Elementary Schools is good. Company's water is supplied to all. No Schools were closed during 1925.

There are no common Lodging Houses in your district, nor are any offensive trades carried on, therefore no special bye-laws dealing with such places are needed.

Housing.

The general condition of the houses in your district has improved ; but there is still considerable shortage. No new houses have been built by the local Authority, but considerable advantage has been taken of the Subsidy Act of 1923, and many houses have been built by private owners.

The population has increased by 440 since last year, and is likely to increase still more. As regards overcrowding there have only been 9 cases during the year, due to shortage of houses.

The general standard of housing in the area has improved. The majority of defects found were imperfections in the roofs and dampness.

The conditions as regards water supply to houses have improved as the Water Companies have extended their supply to hills where hitherto the houses have depended on ponds and wells.

There have been many complaints with regard to the overflowing of cesspools in the Chalfont St. Peter District, this has already been mentioned under Sewage.

Bye-Laws relating to houses, to houses let in lodgings, and to tents, vans, etc.

The present Bye-laws have hitherto proved sufficient, but these are about to be added to to conform with recent legislation.

Number of New Houses erected during 1925 :

(a) Total	417
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts :	
(i.) By the Local Authority	nil
(ii.) By other bodies or persons	193

1.—Unfit Dwelling Houses.

Inspection (i.) Total No. of Dwelling Houses inspected for having defects (under Public Health and Housing Act)	203
---	-----

(ii.) Number of Dwelling Houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District Regulations 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925)	35
(iii.) Number of Dwelling Houses found to be in a state so dangerous, or injurious to health, as to be unfit for human habitation... ..	5
(iv.) Number of Dwelling Houses (exclusive of those referred to under preceeding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	47

2.—Remedy of Defects without service of formal notices.

Number of defective Dwelling Houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	163
--	-----

3.—Action under Statutory Powers.

(a) Proceedings under Section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925 :	
(i.) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	42
(ii.) Number of Dwelling Houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices—	
(a) By Owners	39
(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners ...	nil
(iii.) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declaration by owners of intention to close	nil
(b) Proceeding under Public Health Acts :	
(i.) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	264
(ii.) Number of Dwelling Houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices—	
(a) By Owners	261
(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners ...	nil
(c) Proceedings under Sections 11, 14, and 15, of the Housing Act, 1925 :	
(i.) Number of representations made with a view to making closing orders	nil
(ii.) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	nil
(iii.) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the Dwelling Houses having been rendered fit	nil
(iv.) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	nil
(v.) Number of Dwelling Houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	nil

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

MILK SUPPLY.

There are 31 Dairies and 26 Cowkeepers in the area. There has been improvement in the cleanliness of the milk owing to the improved care and cleanliness in the cowsheds and Dairies.

There have been no cases of Tuberculous milk or cattle. Two of the above Dairies supply Grade A. milk and one Certified milk. These have been examined bacteriologically and found good.

There has been no refusal or revocation of registration of retailers or of licenses for graded and other milk.

MEAT.

Meat inspection (including arrangements for inspection at the time of slaughter and for marking under the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924) is carried out by your Sanitary Inspector.

As regards condemned meat, some is burned, some is buried in lime, and some sent to the Foxhound Kennels.

The administration of the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924, as regards shops, stalls, stores, etc., has been well carried out.

The public slaughter houses are in good condition.

NUMBER OF PRIVATE SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

	In 1920.	In Jan., 1925.	In Dec., 1925.
Registered } Licensed }	14	14	14
Total	14	14	14

OTHER FOODS.

Unsound food is inspected if there is any suspicion, or if called upon so to do.

The bakehouses are lime-washed three times a year and all defects remedied. Other premises where foods are prepared, stores, etc., are inspected from time to time. No cases of food poisoning have occurred in the area.

Prevalence of and control over Infectious Diseases.

During the summer of 1925 there was an epidemic of Scarlet Fever throughout the district, fortunately of a very mild type. It was so scattered—cases occurring in different villages miles apart—that it was impossible to obtain any evidence of the source of infection. In nearly all cases it was possible to isolate the patients at home. There were in all, 32 cases, as compared with 10 the preceeding year, and 24 in 1923.

There was also an epidemic of Diphtheria during the autumn at Chalfont St. Peter. Of 14 cases occurring in the district, 9 occurred in this parish. The source of infection was ultimately traced to a carrier, and after his removal to hospital the occurrence of cases ceased. For a time all school children complaining of sore throats were swabbed, but the carrier proved to be a youth over school age, but related to several school children.

There have been two cases of Encephalitis Lethargica, one of these cases died early in January, 1926.

Swabs and other bacteriological or pathological specimens are sent to the Clinical Research Association, Watergate House, Adelphi. Isolation, whenever possible, is carried out in the patient's home, and has on the whole proved efficacious. Where this is impossible the patient is sent, at the Council's expense, to an Infectious Hospital outside the district.

Disinfection is carried out by Formalin, and infected bedding is destroyed; when necessary the Council compensating the sufferers from any loss sustained, or the bedding can be disinfected at the Amersham Workhouse at the owner's expense.

Premises in which Tuberculosis cases have lived or died are thoroughly disinfected. Anti-Diphtheritic Serum is provided by the council, who also pay for the examination of swabs for Diphtheria and sputum in cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis. The Schick & Dick tests in Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever have not up to the present been used.

During the autumn there were a large number of cases of Whooping Cough, particularly at Chalfont St. Peter and Chalfont St. Giles. There were 10 deaths due to Influenza during the year, and 29 due to Cancer, in both diseases fewer cases than in 1924. There have been no cases of Anthrax or Rabies.

Ages.	Scarlet Fever		Diphtheria.		Enteric.		Varicella.		Encephalitis Lethargica.		Measles.		German Measles.	
	No. of Cases.	Deaths	No. of Cases.	Deaths.	No. of Cases	Deaths	No of Cases.	Deaths.	No. of Cases.	Deaths.	No. of Cases.	Deaths.	No. of Cases.	Deaths.
Under 1 yr.							1				1		2	
1 year							1							
2 years	1		1	1			7						1	
3 years							4						3	
4 years	2		1	1			7							
5 years	4						11						2	
10 years	20		5	1			36				7		1	
15 years	3		2	1			15				1		1	
20 years	1		3				7		1		1			
35 years	1		1		1		1				1			
45 years														
65 & over			1						1	¹ (1926)				

TUBERCULOSIS

New Cases and Mortality during 1925.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0								
1								
5	1				1			
10			1					
15			1					
20		2		1	2			
25	1	1				2		
35		1		1	2	1		
45	1	3			1	2		
55	2				2		1	
65 and upwards.	1							1
TOTALS ...	6	7	2	2	8	5	1	1

There have been no cases of Tuberculosis amongst employees in the Milk Trade.

No action has had to be taken by the Council under the Public Health Act, 1925, Section 62.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

There have been no cases of Puerperal fever, Ophthalmia Neonatorum, Epidemic Diarrhoea or Polio-myelitis reported.

There were a large number of cases of Whooping in the Autumn last year particularly at Chalfont St. Peter and Chalfont St. Giles.

I would like to acknowledge the very efficient way in which your Sanitary Inspector has carried out his duties and my personal obligation to him for his able assistance.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

H. ENGLAND.

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances.

Premises. (1)	Number of		
	Inspections. (2)	Written Notices. (3)	Occupiers prosecuted. (4)
Factories (Including Factory Laundries) ..	27	2	nil
Workshops. (Including Workshop Laundries) ..		3	nil
Workplaces (Other than Outworkers' premises)		6	nil
TOTAL	27	11	nil

Particulars. (1)	Number of Defects.			Number of offences in respect to which Prosecutions were instituted (5)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Referred to H.M. Inspector (4)	
<i>Nuisances under the Public Health Acts: - *</i>				
Want of cleanliness	nil			
Want of ventilation	nil			
Overcrowding	nil			
Want of drainage of floors ..	nil			
Other nuisances	nil			
Sanitary accommodation :				
Insufficient	3	3	nil	nil
Unsuitable or defective ..	6	6	nil	nil
Not separate for sexes ..	2	1	nil	nil
<i>Offences under the Factory and Workshop Acts:—</i>				
Illegal occupation of underground bakehouse (s. 101)	nil			
Other offences (Excluding offences relating to out-work and offences under the Sections mentioned in the Schedule to the Ministry of Health (Factories and Workshops Transfer of Powers) Order, 1921).	nil			
TOTAL	11	10	nil	nil

*Including those specified in Sections 2, 3, 7 and 8 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1921, as remediable under the Public Health Acts.

Nature of Work (1)	Instances. (2)	Notices served. (3)	Prosecutions. (4)
Wearing Apparel—			
Cleaning and washing	3	3	nil
Racquet and tennis balls	4	4	nil
Brush making	1	1	nil
TOTAL	8	8	nil

H. ENGLAND, Medical Officer of Health.

July 24th, 1926

